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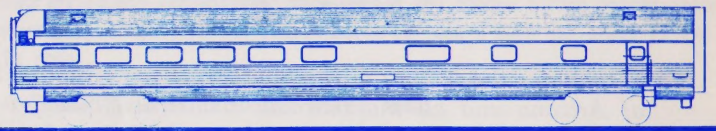

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SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT TO SUBSCRIBERS

Effective January 1, 1976, the yearly subscription rate of RAIL TRAVEL NEWS will be increased from $8.00 to $9.00. The single copy price will change from 35¢ to 40¢. We regret that these changes are necessary to offset the Postal Service's increase in first class mail rates effective Dec. 28, 1975. The overseas airmail rate will be increased from $18.00 to $20.50. Other rate changes will be announced later. RTN, Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709 U.S.A.

RAIL TRAVEL NEWS

35¢
VOL.5 NO. 23
FIRST ISSUE OF
DECEMBER 1975

Issue #121

SPECIAL 5th ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

WELCOME TO RTN'S Fifth Anniversary Issue. As promised, this is a special issue, and is the largest issue we have ever published, pressing closely on our 1-ounce weight limit. Our special cover with its holiday theme is the work of artist Nick Stern, and we take this opportunity to welcome Nick to the RTN staff.

We hope you enjoy this big issue of RTN. With this issue we begin our sixth year of twice-monthly publication. A special anniversary feature appears elsewhere in this issue.

May we also take this opportunity to wish you the best of holiday happiness, and to thank you for your continued loyalty and generous support of RTN.

LETTERS

I especially enjoyed your writeup on the LAKE SHORE LIMITED in the First November issue. However, I find some very minor technical imperfections that I should point out. The first involves the infamous backup move south of Rensselaer. Your reporter states that the train backed up 7 miles to Post Road. It should state that the train backed up 7 miles to the Castleton Bridge which crosses the Hudson River to the Perlman Yard at Selkirk. Post Road is actually the point in the journey referred to in your article as "the junction where the 'missing link' would join the main. Mrs. Carson was on hand, I believe, at Castleton Bridge and not Post Road.

The reason for the slowdown coming into Pittsfield had nothing to do with "beating the band to the station." I arrived at the East St. station a good half-hour before train time and the band was already waiting. Monitoring the progress of the train via railroad radio, one learned that the slowdown due to earliness accomplished two things: downtown Pittsfield got an excellent view of the new slow-moving train for public relations purposes, and late-arriving people at the station could still see the train coming in.

I was also very fortunate to be invited to ride the LAKE SHORE inaugural run from Pittsfield to Springfield. I was very surprised that your reporter did not mention the incident in Russell when an air hose blew between Pub lounge car 3402 and coach 5645 and we went into an emergency stop, altho very smoothly. A crew with a replacement hose hopped off and had it replaced and the line recharged with only about a 15-minute delay. This was announced in the Pub and everybody went about his business.

I also noticed an error in the Rensselaer-Chicago consist of the initial westbound revenue run. Snack lounge 3321 "Molly Pitcher" is listed, coach 5644 is omitted. The reverse is true. Molly and twin 3322 "Anthony Wayne" operate strictly Rensselaer-Boston and return. Only a coach and sleeper plus the Boston engine go thru to Chicago. Another minor error on the first eastbound revenue run lists Pittsfield departure time as 12:40pm on Nov 1. Since I was there to take that trip as far as Springfield, I noted the time as closer to 1pm.

I was disappointed to hear that there are no plans to restore the missing 12 miles of track. We had been lead to believe that replacement was imminent. Four hours, 45 minutes seems a reasonable running time when it is replaced. I can remember many times on NYC and PC runs on the same route that the trip was made in only four hours (Rensselaer-Boston) when the train was late and no padding was necessary.

One thing that must be done is to cut the running times to make for earlier arrivals and later departures at both ends. This would eliminate the need for two extra train sets as well as encourage round trip day journeys to end point cities to attend sporting events and business functions.

It is encouraging to note that in the very near future, we are told, Amtrak intends to move its station in Pittsfield downtown to a point adjacent to the main street and our downtown hotel-office-shopping complex on land given Amtrak by the city at no cost.

As of last report I can state that exceptionally good passenger loadings seem to be the rule on this leg of the LAKE SHORE. I have monitored nearly full coaches, good sleeping car utilization, and heavy lounge use from both traveling and station observations. In fact I was recently told by a conductor and an Amtrak rep that another coach is definitely needed on this leg. All this in off-peak travel time too. Hopefully Amtrak will give us more equipment at least for the holiday period.

Kevin J. Gregoire

Pittsfield, Massachusetts

Recently your magazine carried another scathing denunciation of lexan, and I simply wish to say a few words in its defense.

About two months ago I was on a Reading local, when suddenly I saw a round, black object coming at me. I threw my hands over my face and started to drop to the floor, as the rock, I presume, struck and bounced off the lexan window. It was a very reassuring sound.

Lexan is not perfect; it scratches too easily and becomes opaque with age, but in certain parts of the country it does help the rail traveler keep body and soul together. It would be better, therefore, to press for a better transparent material or else better cleaning methods, and replacement programs for lexan rather than returning to breakable glass.

Arthur J. Malestein

Cornwells Heights, Pennsylvania

My fellow Coloradoan, Roger L. Robertson of Loveland, scores some good points in his letter (last issue). But, in my opinion, his hyperbole weakens his case, and perhaps a longtime residence in the Rocky Mountain West has clouded his sense of economic reality. At any rate, as a longtime railway rider who has lived in the East, Midwest and Mountain West, may I point out these hard facts:

1) The East's high population density <u>does</u> justify Mr. Reistrup's attention to corridor service. Perhaps, as Mr. Robertson says, "corridor service along the front range of the Rockies has been needed for at least five years." No Coloradoan would welcome it more than I (who loved to ride the Burlington Route thru Mr. Robertson's Loveland 34½ years ago when I lived in Cheyenne and traveled occasionally to Denver).. However, to assert--or even to hint--that this is comparable to populous Northeastern corridors (NY-Buffalo, NY-Washington, NY-Boston, etc.) is really stretching reality and truth. As for the LAKE SHORE LIMITED, I could cry because its schedule does not suit travelers like me who want to get off or on the train at Buffalo--but this same schedule permits overnight travel between the East and Cleveland and Chicago--a route that has a bit more ridership potential than, say, Denver-Cheyenne via Loveland <u>and</u> it restores rail service to and from Cleveland. (By the way, the Cleveland-Columbus-Cincinnati corridor completely neglected by Amtrak, is probably the country's potentially most prosperous route still neglected by Amtrak as of December 5, 1975.) Another point: The superior railway service of Great Britain and continental Western Europe must be primarily due to high population density. The same is true for Japan.

2) Most of us who ride the SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR (which serves my home city of Greeley) do <u>not</u> consider ourselves masochists... We think the ZEPHYR is a dependable, comfortable, well-equipped train which we believe Mr. Reistrup will speed up to pre-war levels as soon as roadbed improvement warrants. In fact, at this very moment, my wife and I are looking forward to a pre-Christmas trip aboard this handsome domeliner.

William M. Folger

Greeley, Colorado

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AMTRAK RAISES FARES

Amtrak made the following news release on Dec 5: "Amtrak, in an effort to absorb a portion of inflation related cost increases without reducing rail passenger services, announced plans today for selective fare increases. The last system-wide fare increase by Amtrak was in Nov 1974. Fare increases previously planned for Apr 1, 1975 were deferred on the possibility that they might be avoided.

"Effective Dec 15 most coach fares on unreserved, short-distance trains will be raised along with some first class fares... Most coach fares and some first class fares on long-distance reserved trains will go up on Feb 1. On many Amtrak routes the fare increase will amount to 5%, altho it will be higher on some routes. Metroliner fares will not be increased. Amtrak President Paul H. Reistrup said he hoped to avoid any major increases in Amtrak fares this winter but that the requirement for additional operating funds necessitates either a fare increase or the immediate elimination of some Amtrak trains. 'We chose to go the route of increased fares and further internal cost reductions,' Reistrup said. So far in FY 1976 the company has achieved cost reductions of $14 million and is targeting a total in FY 1976 of over $30 million.

"Reistrup added that starting early in 1976, Amtrak plans to offer a number of innovative fare combinations designed to increase train usage during off peak periods. These special prices, combined with the continuing arrival of new equipment... promise to make train travel in 1976 a better bargain than ever before, he said."

Amtrak said the increases affect most unreserved, short distance trains. On the Boston-Springfield-DC route, coach fares of $5 or more will go up about 10%. All first class conventional Corridor train fares will go up 10%. Other Dec 15 boosts are: NY-Detroit 10%; DC-Cumberland 10%; Chic-Carbondale 5%; Chic-Detroit/Pt. Huron 10%; Chic-St. Louis 5%; Chic-Quincy 10%; Chic-Dubuque 5%; Chic-Milw 10%; Minneapolis-Superior 5%; Seattle-Portland 10%; L.A.-San Diego 5%; Oakland-Bakersfield 5%; Seattle-Vancouver 5%.

On Feb 1 Amtrak will impose a 10% increase on all fares on both Montreal routes, and 5% increases on most other long distance trains, except that on many the fare boost will not be applicable to riders traveling the full route of a train from "end point" to "end point."

LAKE SHORE LIMITED MAKES FAVORABLE SHOWING

Amtrak said this month that the new Chicago to Boston and New York train, the LAKE SHORE LIMITED, carried 9140 passengers during the first half of November. The train made its first revenue run Oct 31. On-time performance for the Chicago-NY section was 70% for the entire month of November, and for the Chicago-Boston segment it was 93.3%. "All of us at Amtrak are encouraged by the ridership," said Paul Reistrup. "Every day about 300 people are boarding (it) in each direction. Our intermediate business is strong, along with our connecting traffic thru Chicago." Amtrak will add extra coaches to the LSL for the Dec 18-Jan 5 holiday period, expecting increased patronage, the company said. Amtrak said the on-time performance was good "considering that extensive track work is underway on the Buffalo-Albany-NY segment of the route... Freezing conditions have not yet set in along this part of the line, and the PC is trying to complete as much of the track improvement program as is possible."

Amtrak found that there are passengers on and off the train every day at every station on the route, including those served during early morning hours. "While we're happy with the high level of ridership, we're not surprised. We're operating a good train thru a very populated area", said Mr. Reistrup.

Amtrak's Joe Vranich made an informal telephone poll of 13 far-flung Amtrak stations (San Francisco, Milwaukee, Denver, Omaha, Houston, Dallas, Topeka, Cheyenne, Oklahoma City, St. Louis, Kansas City, and Rockford and Springfield IL) and every one of them reported reservations made for points on the LAKE SHORE LIMITED route. Reistrup said the poll, tho limited, "illustrates the national scope of Amtrak and how well the LAKE SHORE LIMITED fits into our nationwide pattern of train service."

NOTE TO READERS: We are expecting to publish the Second December issue of RTN on Dec 26.

AMTRAK ON-TIME PERFORMANCE FIGURES FOR OCTOBER

Amtrak released its October on-time performance and ridership figures Dec 11, and the on-time figures, along with September 1975 and October 1974 for comparison, are shown below. July and August data were printed in the First October issue of RTN. On-time performance showed essentially no change from the previous month, up only one tenth of one per cent systemwide. Note that two NY-Chicago routes are shown. The bottom one represents the new LAKE SHORE LIMITED, showing zero on-time performance for its one day of Oct 31 (the zeroes for Sept and for Oct 1974 should be blanks, since the train did not run then.) Similarly, the Boston-Albany figure under Short Haul routes represents a single run of the LSL.

ROUTE-BY-ROUTE SUMMARY
ON-TIME PERFORMANCE
(ICC METHOD)
October, 1975

	Per Cent On-Time		
	Oct. '75	Sept. '75	Oct. '74
METROLINERS	87.4	84.5	85.4
TURBOTRAINS			
New York/Boston	43.1	33.9	59.5
TURBOLINERS			
Midwest	78.3	74.3	71.3
SHORT HAUL			
Minneapolis/Superior	100.0	91.7	----
Oakland/Bakersfield	100.0	96.7	100.0
Boston/Albany	100.0	----	----
Chicago/Quincy	96.8	88.3	43.5
New York/Harrisburg	95.7	97.6	82.6
Los Angeles/San Diego	95.2	93.3	93.0
Seattle/Portland	95.2	96.7	92.0
Chicago/Port Huron	95.2	91.7	98.4
Seattle/Vancouver	95.2	91.7	91.4
Chicago/Minneapolis	94.3	100.0	94.4
New York/Philadelphia	93.7	93.0	95.6
Philadelphia/Harrisburg	89.1	86.5	80.8
Chicago/Milwaukee	88.4	92.1	93.5
New York/Washington	87.2	84.7	92.0
Washington/Cumberland	84.3	84.5	71.4
New York/Syracuse	82.3	95.0	97.3
Chicago/Detroit	81.0	82.1	88.7
Chicago/Dubuque	72.6	86.7	91.9
New York/Albany	66.7	55.8	84.6
New Haven/Springfield	66.1	67.8	76.4
Charlottesville/Newport N	64.5	36.7	72.6
Chicago/St. Louis	63.6	64.5	72.6
Detroit/Jacksbn	60.9	52.4	----
New York/Montreal	54.8	71.7	----
New York/Boston	53.2	54.1	80.0
New York/Buffalo	51.6	66.7	81.8
Boston/Philadelphia	51.1	69.7	91.4
Washington/Springfield	50.0	----	----
Washington/Harrisburg	41.6	37.2	53.9
Chicago/Carbondale	21.0	23.3	67.7
Chicago/Champaign	11.3	10.0	40.3
TOTAL SHORT DISTANCE	79.5	79.4	85.5
LONG DISTANCE			
Chicago/Norfolk	98.4	91.7	----
Chicago/Seattle	97.8	98.1	97.1
New York/Florida	95.2	96.4	96.8
Chicago/Los Angeles	93.6	85.0	95.2
Chicago/Oakland	91.9	95.0	90.3
Chicago/Washington	90.3	80.0	75.8
Chicago/Dallas	90.3	86.7	----
Seattle/Los Angeles	85.5	90.0	74.2
Washington/Montreal	85.5	85.0	90.3
St. Louis/Laredo	74.2	72.0	73.1
New York/Detroit	74.2	93.3	50.0
Washington/Boston	70.0	74.9	93.9
Chicago/Houston	66.1	68.3	91.9
Chicago/Florida	65.6	61.4	80.6
New Orleans/Los Angeles	55.6	38.5	76.9
Chicago/New Orleans	50.0	51.7	40.3
New York/Chicago	30.6	3.3	12.9
New York/Kansas City	21.0	6.7	0.0
New York/Chicago	0.0	0.0	0.0
TOTAL LONG DISTANCE	75.4	75.3	76.6
TOTAL AMTRAK	78.5	78.4	83.2

October was not a good ridership month for Amtrak, but not a bad one either, considering the slow economy in 1975. Comparing ridership with the same month of 1974, systemwide it was up 1% overall, with first class down 4% and coach class up 1%. In October Amtrak counted 31,740 first class riders and 1,266,695 coach passengers. In Oct 1974 the figures were 33,036 and 1,250,800.

Short distance ridership was up 1% over Oct 1974 (1,047,341 vs. 1,039,198) and for long distance the increase was 3%, with first class down 4% and coach up 4%. Amtrak carried 251,094 long distance riders, against 244,638 in 1974. As usual, specific long distance routes varied in ridership patterns: routes showing definite gains included Chicago-Florida (11%), Chic-Houston and Dallas (21%), DC-Cincinnati-Chicago (up 18%), and NY-Albany-Montreal (25%).

AMTRAK'S BIGGEST DAY

THE THANKSGIVING HOLIDAYS CULMINATED IN ONE OF AMTRAK'S HEAVIEST AND MOST DIFFICULT DAYS IN THE MIDWEST AND EAST

by Jack Ferry

The balmy Indian Summer experienced this fall in most of the Midwest came to an abrupt halt just as the nation was entering one of the busiest isolated travel periods of the year--the Thanksgiving holidays. Early record snowfalls caused extreme havoc and affected all modes of transportation--including Amtrak.

Snow moving east from the Rockies began affecting travel on Amtrak as early as Sunday Nov 23. A freight derailment on the BN east of Omaha forced train 6, the SF ZEPHYR, to detour from Pacific Junction (Omaha) to St. Joseph, MO to West Quincy, IL to Galesburg and Chicago, arriving at 11:35pm. Buses were run between Omaha and Galesburg to pick up local travelers, but due to the snow the train beat the buses to Galesburg. Buses continued to Chicago, arriving about 1:45am.

Meanwhile, the EMPIRE BUILDER, train 8, was being detoured from Sandpoint, ID to Missoula, MT to Havre because of a BN freight derailment, and arrived in Chicago on Nov 24 about 9pm. On Nov 25 the EMPIRE BUILDER #7 departed Minneapolis on time and another derailment blocked the line near Winona, WI on the Milwaukee Road. The train was detoured from Winona to La Crosse via the BN and then back to Milwaukee Road, reaching Chicago at 11pm.

Record snows hit Kansas City and St. Louis early on the 26th, closing most roads and airports. All Chicago-St. Louis flights were cancelled, forcing many holiday travelers to seek the only mode moving--Amtrak. The Buffalo Bills football team was stranded in Chicago over Wednesday night and arrived in St. Louis just 2 hours before game time.

Amtrak Union Station in Chicago was the scene of mad confusion as early as mid-afternoon Wednesday. Extra cars and trains were added to accommodate what was one of the busiest days in Chicago since the mid-1960's. Just about then, buses began arriving from O'Hare airport with many of the stranded airline passengers. They were told by the airlines: "Amtrak will take care of you." And indeed Amtrak did!

Boarding passes were needed for many of the departing trains. As the passes ran out, the throngs headed back to the ticket windows and information desk. But the ticket windows were closed for a short time. Only one Amtrak employee was left to man the information desk, and the hundreds descending upon him were a sight to behold. It happened that he was perhaps the most capable person there, and one doubts that Mr. Reistrup himself could have done a better job.

All outbound trains were packed, most with standing room only. The BLUE WATER, ABRAHAM LINCOLN, and STATE HOUSE, even with its expanded consist, could not accommodate everyone. Many were turned away. On Thanksgiving Day, Amtrak gave train 301 three coaches in place of the damaged Turboliner--a little over 150 seats. But the train left Chicago with nearly 250 passengers! Many who couldn't leave on Wednesday went on Thursday morning, and Amtrak was not prepared for them.

A freight derailment on ICG tracks near Springfield, IL that day forced the northbound STATE HOUSE and ABRAHAM LINCOLN to wait nearly 6 hours for the track to clear. The trains were combined at Springfield (4 engines, 16 cars) and reached Chicago at 7:15pm. Train 301 was also blocked and arrived in St. Louis about 5:30pm. Train 304 (using 301's equipment) left St. Louis about 6:45pm and reached Chicago after midnight. Train 303, the ABE LINCOLN, was annulled because of equipment shortages, altho #305, a makeup Turbo STATE HOUSE, finally left Chicago about 7:15pm. After being turned and cleaned, the ABE LINCOLN equipment deadheaded to St. Louis after midnight and did not arrive in time to depart back at 7am. It arrived back in Chicago on the 28th about 2:30pm.

The last day of the holiday weekend, Sunday Nov 30, was again filled with chaos. Once more extra cars were added to supplement regular equipment. The new LAKE SHORE was completely filled as it departed with 7 coaches. There was standing room only

in six coaches on the BLUE WATER. Advance 354, Turboliner, and regular 354 using MICHIGAN EXECUTIVE equipment, were also filled to the rafters. The ILLINI had 5 bilevels--all filled. The ABRAHAM LINCOLN carried 6 coaches and two parlor cars. Advance 347, the ILLINOIS ZEPHYR, consisted of 5 EL CAPITAN lounge cars and two high-level coaches, while regular 347 ran 6 bilevel cars. Twelve coaches made up advance 59, which ran to Carbondale.

Most trains left late because of the crowds and the congestion of loading and unloading late trains on the same platform simultaneously. The SOUTHWEST LIMITED, LAKE SHORE, and SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR all arrived in Chicago about 3:30pm.

As the afternoon wore on and the trains departed, the crowds thinned out. Amtrak had not only emptied its coach yards, it also had filled five buses for various Michigan points and one for St. Louis. It had been a long weekend.

The consists of trains listed below at Chicago Nov 30 will indicate the alterations Amtrak made, and the equipment press:

TRAIN NO. ENGINE(S); CAR NOS (NON-AMTRAK INDICATED WHERE APPLICABLE)

#48 599; 1532, 2804, 2816, 5645, 5642, 8341, 5663, 5682, 5644.
#351 344, 225; 5010, 6087, 5627, 3921, 3920, 3871.
#50-54 630, 641; 1101, 1513, 5675, 5410, 5649, 2010, 2535, 8200, 9540, 5241.
#7 532, 529; 1098, 1023, 1008, "Silver Prairie" dorm, 4890, 4526, 9458, 9364, 8095, 4547, 4823, 9224, 2659, 1207.
#51-55 544, 645; 1168, 1525, 2011, 5673, 4431, 6423, 9469, 5443, 8401, 2402.
#4 520, 500; 1414, 1053, 9995, 9914, 9955, 9983, 9945, 9933, 2210, 9353, 2757.
#364 422; 1600, 6409, 3926, 7000, 6407, 8382, 3870.
#40 592, 598; 1051, 1070, 5258, 5252, 2002, 2025, 5266, 5263, 4300, 3403, 8802-03, 3252, 2380, 2553, 2557.
#5 621, 587; 1163, 1192, BN 710, 2269 deadhead, 2254 deadhead, BN 5085, 4818, 4471, 9475, "Linoma", 8054, 2656, 2620, 9251.
Advance #354 225, PC 3242, 5462, 6046.
#354 62, 93, 94, 95, 63.
#49 590; 8333 deadhead, 1516, 2773, 2802, 5651, 5654, 8339, 5650, 5412, 4423, 3959, 6412.
#381 315, CNW 704, 9600, 9619, 9611, 9618.
#15 512, 517; 1059, 2752, 8043, 3380, 4853, 4856, 9904, 9931, 9928, 2756.
#303 352, 465; 1601, 4425, 4845, 4956, 5641, 5428, 8320, 9330, 3770.
#6 629, 586; 1080, 1184, 1060, 2200 dorm, 4552, 4824, 4805, 9454, 9380, 8049, 2663, 2653, 9250.
#8 engines?; 1064, 1003, BN 425, 4521, 5017, 9361, 8094, 9220, 2671, 5691, 4529.
Advance #347 612; 9954, 9957, 9970, 9971, 9972, 9974, 9973.
#347 703, 702; 9601, 9617, 9614, CNW 702, 9620, 9612.
#305 412; 3871, 5628, 5273, 9401, 3901, 3333.
#371 15, 11, 10 (RDC's)
Advance #59 615, 330; 5010, 6087, 5627, 3921, 3920, 5673, 4421, 6423, 9469, 5443, 5412, 4423.
#59 614, 613; 1164, 2150, 2240, 8099, 5407, 6020, 6068, 5414, 5011, 3342.
#3 513, 506; 1193, 2731 dorm, 9913, 9956, 9984, 9922, 2220, 9352, 8071, 2729, 2715.
#327 410; Milw cars 500, 494, 602, 482.

(we acknowledge the assistance of Michael Koch on the above)
(Note: engines 703-702 on train 347 are new GE diesels)

THE SCENE ON THE SHORE LINE

by Bill McDonald

Sunday Nov 30 was an interesting day, to say the least. For one thing, it was probably the busiest day on the Shore Line in at least ten years! For another, the 2pm train out of Boston, second section of #177, was an unusual sight, with a power car and ten new Amcoaches trailing (get this!) three ex-New Haven geeps. The geeps are normally assigned to MBTA commuter trains in the Boston area. I haven't seen a geep on an Amtrak train in probably two years, but on the point of a string

of Amcoaches, it was bizarre!

The foreman at Motor Storage in New Haven--the engine terminal--has been working there for ten years, and said he could not recall a busier day. The "old timers" too, who talk about the New Haven in most nostalgic reveries, said it was just like the good old days.

Both power and equipment were turned in what, for Amtrak, must have been record time. For example, #180's new Budds were turned and left as 1st section of #179, indicating a layover in Boston of less than 3½ hours. Also, 1st 170's 13 Budds were turned to #183. Perhaps a better example of equipment utilization was the power turnaround. When we arrived in New Haven, there were exactly two engines at Motor Storage. Every train east after 3pm had engines fresh in from Boston--many normally seen only on MBTA commuter trains, including the above-mentioned geeps. These three geeps were our power back to Boston on 1st #176.

The MBTA coaches are now being restricted to 70mph in Amtrak trains, tho they do 79mph in MBTA trains on the main line between Boston and Philadelphia. We stole 5 to 6 mph and managed to make our running time between New Haven and New London. We received something of a scare in New London when the operator at Groton Tower--across the Thames River bridge--advised us to say that the bridge would not lock, and we were to "stand hard" until further notice. I said to myself, "Things were going too smoothly; it's always something." However, the home board at the bridge cleared after but a 5-minute delay. I heard an anonymous voice over the train radio say, "See, there's power in prayer. Those golden calves come thru every time!" This was followed by much merriment, whistles, etc. At the time of all this, there were 4 trains in the area: our 1st 176, followed by 162, and behind him 152. Further back was 2nd 176, and westbound there was 163.

Just like old times is certainly what it was. It reminded me of the evening I spent in the tower at the old N.Y. Central's downtown Syracuse station in Dec 1960, when I was a freshman in college. The old NYC had two sections of #27, #42, and #17 plus extra mail trains, and the rest of the still somewhat impressive "Steel Fleet." I personally haven't seen anything like that Sunday in 15 years, and I missed the halcyon days of railroading--born too late, I always thought--but maybe not.

NOV 30 SHORE LINE TRAINS WITH CONSIST SUMMARIES:

#180 2 E units; 1 power car, 10 Amcoaches (10" late)
#168 2 E units; 10 coaches (25" late)
1st #170 3 E units; 1 power car, 13 Amcoaches (20" late)
2nd #170 2 E units; 10 cars (30" late)
1st #172 3 E units; 14 unrefurbished cars (25" late)
2nd #172 3 geeps; 10 coaches, 1 parlor, 1 baggage (35" late)
1st #174 1 E unit, 1 geep; 11 unrefurbished cars (15" late)
2nd #174 2 E units; 9 cars, mostly MBTA ex-NH (30" late)

Eastbound Trains

#150 TurboTrain (on time)
3rd #174 2 E units; 10 cars (1' 25" late)
1st #176 3 geeps; 10 MBTA coaches, 1 parlor car (1' 30" late)
2nd #176 3 E units; 16 cars (about 2 hours late)
#162 2 E units; 4 cars (30" late) #152 TurboTrain (30" late)
1st #178 TurboTrain (8" early) 2nd #178 2 E units; 8 cars (40" late)
3rd #178 2 E units; 8 cars (1 hr late) Psgr Extra (with 164's equipment east of New York) 3 E units; 14 cars (arrived about 5am in Boston)

Westbound Trains:

#151 TurboTrain (on time) #169 3 E units; 13 coaches, 1 parlor (20" late)
#171 3 E units; 17 coaches, 1 parlor (44" late)
1st #173 2 E units, 1 geep; 1 power car, 10 Amcoaches (on time)
2nd #173 2 E units; 9 coaches, 1 parlor (25" late) #153 TurboTrain (on time)
1st #177 TurboTrain (36" early) 2nd #177 3 geeps; 1 parlor, 10 Amcoaches (-25")
1st #179 3 E units; 1 power car, 10 Amcoaches (30" late)
2nd #179 2 E units; 6 cars (45" late) #185 2 E units; 7 cars (20" late)

(continued on page 23)

RAIL TRAVEL WEEK

Peter Roehm's adventures on his way to the LAKE SHORE inaugural

On Monday, 26 October, this writer flew an United DC-8 to Chicago thence connecting to the CTA 40-Jefferson Park bus for a subway/elevated ride into the city at Washington station. This bus/rail link between the airport and the city costs but seventy-five cents compared to the limo for $2.75 and the cab for gosh knows how much. Once downtown it was over to the ICG/CSS&SB Randolph Street station, an aged matron of lesser credential somewhat dark under the eyes and a bit ragged in attire but not unlike many commuter edifices around the country. The ICG's Highliners come and go on the lower level and the South Shore's "interurbans" use the weathered wooden platforms "out back" in a scene more tuned to some rural freight station at the end of the branch. If the South Shore claims hard times, and they do, then Randolph is a true sign of near poverty.

I would be aboard Train #263, a two-car departure at 1228 for Michigan City with cars #100 and #5, the former of large windows, the latter of older style smaller windows. I would have preferred a South Bend run but weekday service between these two points is all but non-existent. The electrics left on time with a fair crowd and received a few handfuls at the additional city stops along the shared ICG/CSS&SB trackage to Kensington. The interior of the cars was clean, painted in "hospital-beige", and aging gracefully. The ICG trackage was rough riding and when passing the stadium one noticed just a few of the old IC electrics left. Once on the South Shore track speed picked up and the ride seemed smoother; the roadbed looked well ballasted and like one would hope to find on an electric commuter line. One of the Russian freight electrics was passed and that was the only non-passenger power observed during the run. East Chicago and Gary contributed fair numbers of riders to and from but the cars were less than one-third filled after the Gary station. The country is a little bit of everything: midwestern interurban rural, light and heavy industrial, and center-street running as would be the case for several blocks approaching the Michigan City station, a fading reminder of a brighter day. Although clean on the inside and not all that bad on the outside the interior is rather barren and bleak of activity . It has potential for a revitalized South Shore operation; the city transit system just recently moved out from its use of the back area as it claimed the South Shore would not repair the rear roof over the parked buses as it cost too much; the city now has a new bus facility elsewhere in town.

I returned to Chicago on #276, the 1450 departure from Michigan City, and became involved in conversation with fellow passengers that the run went by quickly although I did notice that the passenger count was up from the eastbound run earlier in the afternoon. The South Shore is an interesting ride but with some sort of change in the wind I would suggest a trip as early as possible as I am sure that if the states pick up the tab on this service new equipment will arrive and if the states reject payment then there will be nothing more of the last of the midwestern electrics.

Having detrained at the Van Buren station, one stop before the Randolph terminus, I walked past La Salle Street Station (CRI&P) enroute to Union Station to board the GM&O's #17 to Joliet. Yes, that <u>is</u> GM&O! It is the only train left running with a solid GM&O consist from F3 through the three coaches, all painted in GM&O red. And with the ICG having all but wiped out most of the last reminders of this road it was indeed an uplift to see this "ghost" still riding the rails five days per week. The consist was F3 #880B, lightweight coaches 3052 and 3060, and heavyweight coach 3099. A fourth lightweight coach, used for backup, was recently sideswiped and will not be repaired; thus, the three coaches left are all that is left. For the record keepers, the number on the fourth was 3055.

While in my seat on the heavyweight I observed on adjacent trackage the Penn Central's Valparaiso local with two dingy E-8's and six coaches that looked like they had stepped from the pages on Viet-Nam in Paul Theroux' "The Great Railway Bazaar;" the windows were in "bathroom green" and the appearance on the exterior was one of a Kansas dustbowl express. Very depressing. Following its departure in backed the second of the two daily locals and it was no better looking. It was one E-8 and four coaches. Between my GM&O train and the PC derelicts was Amtrak's three RDC-units "Black Hawk," consisting of Numbers 15, 30, and 10: the front two units were empty and but a handful or two occupied the last car as it departed on time for Rockford and Dubuque. This train needs more patronage and more publicity.

GM&O's "Plug," the name affectionately given this local by all who know it, departed on time and is carded to arrive in Joliet, thirty-seven miles and eight stations later, just fifty minutes from departure. It rarely does this, I am told, and tonight would be no exception - to the point where I was concerned about my Rock Island connection at Joliet. The train moves right along hitting the high sixties at some points. The crowd is more women than men and more like a family affair as the riders are old time GM&O loyalists or Rock Island expatriates fed up with a lower level of service in both equipment and speed on the Granger carrier. Our arrival in Joliet's Union Station was at 1828 and the "Quad Cities Rocket" was due at 1831 but, fortunately, was running about five minutes late. As with the South Shore I would heartily suggest that anyone interested in an interesting bit of nostalgia hurry to Chicagoland and catch this "ghost train" from a railroad that little else remains of before the expected RTA re-equips the line with bi-level cars and newer locomotives, or some other fate befalls the line prematurely. Like the Erie's Cleveland - Youngstown train (now with a Geep-7 and no more E-8) the GM&O's "Plug" is something from another time and should be savored while it is still there. The conductor blows a "police" whistle before each stop and the train has an air of yesterday - so hurry since tomorrow is probably not that far off.

The Rock's "Quad Cities" was due at "31" but wasn't in sight and thus two additional trains would grace Joliet's platform in the interim: Amtrak's #305, "State House", out of Chicago at 1745 was in on time and following its departure came Rock Island's #423, a twelve-car commuter run headed by E-8's 641 and 649 with a string of elderly commutation coaches. Then a headlight, a horn, and comes the Rock's Rocket.

E-8, 650, in red and gold and clean, too, pulls in five minutes late with but two cars, the parlor having been dropped two months before. The coach was a silver-fluted-side car, #365, and was trailed by ex-Golden State diner-lounge, #411, which had originally been ordered for the stillborn "Golden Rocket," a planned SP-RI train that would have served the Chicago-Arizona market. The diner ended up on the "Golden State" and the name board still bears its name. A handful boarded at Joliet although the coach had only about fifteen or so passengers with about another half dozen over drinks in the lounge. Following departure and ticket-taking I adjourned to the diner and was the only occupant for some while before a couple just in from a "Southwestern Limited" connection arrived - and praised the Rock's roadbed over the Santa Fe. The decor was definitely Sun Country in orange/gold/brown and the chairs were modern highbacks taken from the now-closed Track One Restaurant at LaSalle Street Station. The table cloths were in red vinyl topped with plastic carnations and unmarked table and dinner ware. The service was friendly and fast with two waiters and one chef holding down the operation. My waiter had been a former "Golden State" man so was right at home in this car. I could not complain about the meal, consisting of martini, fish filet, large salad, corn bisquit, rolls, corn, fries, and strawberry sundae, all aided by some Christian Brothers dry sauterne; although the Rio Grande and the Southern have better. The train moved right along and the track was smooth enough so that the beverages were not jumping from the plastic "glasses" as has been the case on other runs, most notably the "Panama."

We were a bit late into Rock Island, Illinois, and the station was in good order and clean. It could sure use more patrons and possibly after the Amtrak succession to this service there will be more publicity and thus more usage (unless the "Black Hawk" example is allowed to prevail). I now had three and one-half hours before my "Barking Dog" would arrive from L.A. and retrieve me for the final lap into the Windy City (which I understand is no longer true - Fargo is the windiest). The two bus depots were closed (Rock Island is one of those cities that closes at three and woe to you if you are there after nine and need a cup of coffee)and so I "hung out" in an adjacent taxi office until the fifteen-minute late Hound arrived. Noticeably the Greyhound depot had the NAMBO anti-Amtrak posters displayed on the windows and elsewhere, the Trailways depot made no display of it - and I have noticed this elsewhere on my travels. The Hound was in Chicago five minutes late leaving just under two hours before the Lake Shore Limited would depart on its inaugural run. The Rock is still just that and, as in both trains previously discussed, I would suggest a Chicago visit soon before Amtrak changes all.

Rail Canada

CANADA'S MAIL STRIKE caught the following news note en route, and thus is responsible for our delay in reporting: CN commuter train service between Toronto and Barrie, Ont., some 60 miles to the north, was interrupted in mid-October by a derailment caused by a defective switch. The 4-car train, carrying 190 passengers, was 15 mins north of downtown Toronto when the passenger cars, but not the locomotive, moved into a siding at 30mph and struck a refrigerator car. Seats flew loose in the cars, injuring some 30 passengers. CN closed the line for a few days for repair work. The train had been inaugurated April 1, 1974 following a citizen campaign to the CTC.

ONE WEEK AFTER the CN derailment, the Toronto City Council voted to block sale of city land to the GO Transit system for use by the new Richmond Hill GO Trains, unless GO could prove that the new service would be beneficial to the city. This was the latest in a series of "no-growth" moves to halt expansion of transportation systems as an expedient method of reducing Toronto's still-explosive growth rate.

EXACT-FARE SYSTEM, an early study shows, has produced no detrimental effects on the Toronto transit system. Traffic increased 5.19% between 1974 and 1975, despite introduction of the plan. An expected decline in patronage did not develop.

BRITISH COLUMBIA VOTERS on Dec 11 defeated the socialist New Democratic Party government and restored the conservative Social Credit Party, ending a 20-year NDP reign. Pre-election rumouring had indicated that Social Credit leaders would consider replacing the "Princess Marguerite" on the Victoria-Seattle summer ferry service with the "Queen of Surrey," ex-Denmark diesel liner. The "Marguerite" would then be assigned to cruise service north from Vancouver.

FORMER ONTARIO PREMIER John Robarts told the press recently that limiting the use of autos in major cities is inevitable, setting off a furor among public figures. Those attacking the former premier invoked the necessity of doctors using autos to attend patients and other arguments ranging to the public's freedom to go where the public wishes as long as gasoline taxes are paid.

RETURN TO STREETCARS on Toronto's present Spadina bus route may be delayed until determination of a southern terminus for the cars can be agreed upon by the City Council. The aldermen object to the proposed Clarence Loop near a park and popular lunch-time eating area, and want the proposed terminal moved to a site more convenient to connecting buses for various points on the Lake Ontario waterfront.

PHONE RESERVATION CLERKS for CP Rail in Montreal have been talking about a mid-January fare increase, tho no details are yet available.

OTHER TICKET OFFICES apparently closed by CN, in addition to the Victoria closing reported last issue, include Calgary and Anchorage, Alaska, both missing from the October system timetable.

THE POSTAL STRIKE in Canada ended in early December, and the U.S. Postal Service withdrew its embargo on Canadian mail Dec 5. On Dec 6 we mailed three issues of RTN that had been held for Canadian subscribers. This is the first issue to be mailed to Canada without delay since the strike began.

RTN'S RAIL TRAVEL YEARBOOK 1975

is a unique event in the history of passenger train publishing.

This beautiful, approximately 50-page, 8½x11" softbound book will be mailed to purchasers beginning about the end of December.

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5 Years of RTN

AN INTERVIEW WITH EDITOR JAMES RUSSELL
ON THE OCCASION OF RTN'S 5th ANNIVERSARY

Q. WHAT LED YOU TO BEGIN PUBLISHING RAIL TRAVEL NEWS?

A. This is usually the first question people I meet ask, and I've come to adopt a stock answer: a fit of temporary insanity. But more seriously, I tried to provide what I felt I myself lacked--a frequent news source that would cover passenger trains with nationwide scope, to keep one up with all the forces that were influencing the passenger train scene for good or ill. The decision to begin publication was made in the summer of 1970, tho the first issue didn't appear until that December. At that time, the government was just making plans for its skeletal system to be run by "Railpax," later named Amtrak. The first issue by chance appeared one week after the DOT's announcement of the proposed system--which as you know, was later enlarged due to pressure from train supporters. I don't really know how important this timing was in RTN's later acceptance and growth. I do know that the Dec. 7, 1970 issue was mailed to a small handful of initial subscribers, and that most of them are still with us.

Let me ask the next question for you: how do you find enough train news to fill an issue twice a month? This is generally the next question people who are not thoroughly knowledgeable with the rail travel scene ask. The answer is that finding the news is not the real problem. The problem is trying to fit it all into each issue. The fact is that there is always plenty of interesting news available, but the average person is unaware of it because the media in general give little space to passenger trains. Here on the West Coast there is almost a news blackout on passenger trains. The Seattle papers do a good job reporting transportation news, but in Portland and in most of California one would hardly guess from reading newspapers that passenger train service exists. Perhaps this is due to the influence of Southern Pacific in this area. There is one bright spot in California transportation reporting: the presence of Harre Demoro on the Oakland Tribune, who reports BART news more thoroughly and fairly than anyone else.

Q. WHAT MAKES RTN DIFFERENT FROM OTHER MAGAZINES?

A. Some things are obvious, others not. Some of the not so obvious things are the fact that RTN cannot operate financially the same way most other publications do. We are much less dependent upon advertising, because we have very limited space for ads. We have never solicited advertising, except for the little messages to advertisers that appear in the pages of RTN. We don't even have any advertising rate cards; the rates are so simple that they're simply printed in each issue. Since we cannot expand the size of issues in an unlimited way, we cannot accommodate enough advertising to make it a big source of revenue. Thus the subscriber has to bear the costs of producing RTN.

The reason for this, of course, is our first class mailing. If we exceeded one ounce per issue, we'd double our postage costs. We tried an experiment a few years ago--we tried using third class mailing, and subscribers termed it a "disaster." They overwhelmingly voted to continue first class delivery.

Which brings us to another way RTN is different: RTN is run very democratically, tho this may not be obvious to readers. We get a very large amount of mail--of feedback--from readers, and it's pretty easy to tell, without taking a formal poll, what readers think about RTN and its various features. We pay very close attention to our readers, and try to give them what they want. After all, that's the reason

RTN was started in the first place--to give passenger train supporters the information they need and want in order to encourage and foster their support of trains.

Q. DO YOU RELY MUCH ON YOUR READERS FOR NEWS AND INFORMATION?

A. We certainly do! We especially rely on readers to supply local information, such as reports of derailments and other news that occurs in their area, which is often well-reported by small local papers, but hardly mentioned in the larger publications. And of course events that readers themselves observe and report are greatly needed and appreciated--events of interest to train lovers, such as unusual train movements or consists, that never get into print elsewhere.

Another very important way readers support RTN is thru their favorable comments about RTN. We are constantly delighted by the enthusiastic reactions from readers, and it's not at all an exaggeration to say that these really keep us motivated to do our best job in turning out a twice-monthly publication.

Lots of readers tell us in their letters and on the "comment" portion of their renewal forms that RTN is their favorite train magazine. We're really happy that they're enthusiastic--it's a good feeling to be able to add some happiness to the lives of several thousand people twice a month. But you know, we get more fun out of RTN than our readers do, because they have it just twice a month, while we get to read their mail six days a week!

Q. WHAT FEATURES OF RTN DO READERS ENJOY THE MOST?

A. They tell us that the Mixed Train of Thoughts department is their favorite. They like the train riding articles and the first-hand reports on new service, such as the recent LAKE SHORE LIMITED article. The new Cars & Consists department is eliciting a lot of response. One reader just wrote that he found it a "pain." Of course no one can please everyone all the time. I'm afraid he'll just have to tolerate the consists, since, being a democracy, we have to bow to the wishes of the majority.

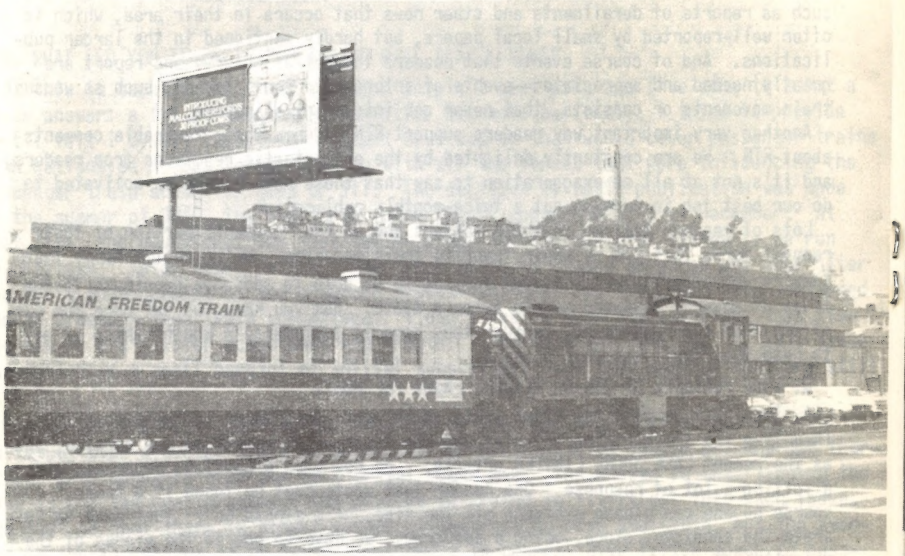
Q. HAS RTN EVER HAD ANY CRISIS SITUATIONS?

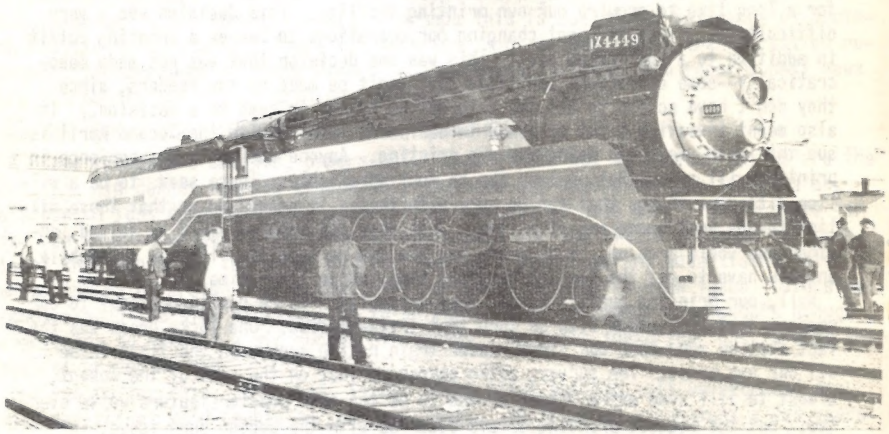
A. The biggest crisis we've had occurred just last spring. We'd been planning for a long time to acquire our own printing facility. This decision was a very difficult one, since it meant changing our operations to become a printing outfit in addition to a publishing one. (This was one decision that was not made democratically--some operations decisions just can't be made by the readers, since they don't have access to all the information needed to come to a decision.) It also meant investing a lot of money in equipment. Well, with the Second April issue this year, we began doing our own printing. Anyone who has had experience in printing will agree that presses can be most unreliable. There seem to be a million different things that can go awry with them. It seemed to us that these million things went wrong one at a time. Just when one problem would be solved, another one would crop up. Each press has its own personality, like an automobile, and you have to get the feel of handling them, which takes time.

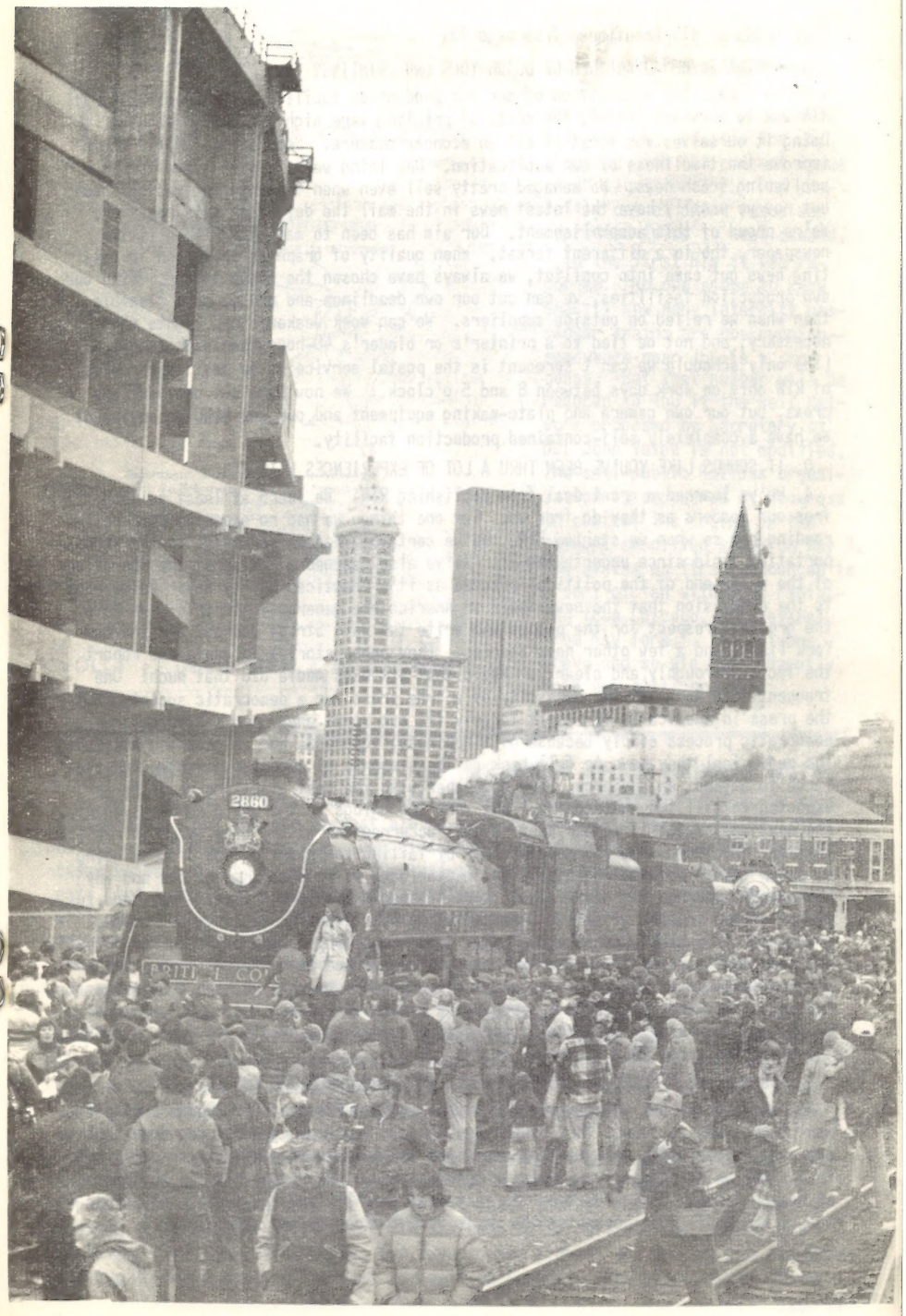
Well, our printing quality became very irregular. We're really grateful to our readers that they stuck with us thru that trying period. One lucky break was the fact that we announced our first reader train rating survey in the first issue off our own press. The survey, altho announced just on the spur of the moment, almost to fill some extra space, proved to be the most popular feature we've ever had. But the biggest printing crisis occurred with the Second June issue, in which we reported the first survey results. Some of the pages came out so badly that they were unreadable. It was true of every copy that came off the press. We made the decision to send them out anyway, and in the next issue we added a supplement reprinting the bad sections of the previous issue. But our printing has been gradually improving till it's up to a level we consider satisfactory. It will continue to improve; it won't revert to the problem stage again.

(continued on page 16)

PHOTO GALLERY







(Right) The British (Columbians) are coming! Seattle's Amtrak station was awash with steam engine enthusiasts at 2pm on Nov 1 as the B.C. Railway "Royal Hudson" engine arrived and backed up to the American Freedom Train's steam engine ex-SP 4449. Seattle's new domed stadium is at left. A color rendition of this scene appears in Trains Magazine (Jan 1976). Photo by Glenn Lee.
(Above) The American Freedom Train arrived in San Francisco on Dec 9, and in the shadow of Coit Tower, S.F. Belt Railway switcher #25 pulled the AFT crew cars toward the Presidio, where the exhibit train would appear. Meanwhile, engine 4449 preened itself on the Belt Railway just south of the Bay Bridge prior to moving to Aquatic Park for public display. Photos by Tracques Seide.

FIVE YEARS OF RTN (continued from page 13)

Q. WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES OF DOING YOUR OWN PRINTING?

A. In a way, the acquisition of our own production facilities was inevitable, if RTN was to survive. First, the costs of printing were high and getting higher. Doing it ourselves was first of all an economy measure. Second, it enabled us to improve the timeliness of our publication. One thing we've always aimed for is publishing fresh news. We managed pretty well even when the printing was sent out; but now we usually have the latest news in the mail the day after it's reported. We're proud of this accomplishment. Our aim has been to make RTN like a little newspaper, tho in a different format. When quality of graphics and speed in getting news out came into conflict, we always have chosen the speed factor. With our own production facilities, we can set our own deadlines and can be more flexible than when we relied on outside suppliers. We can work weekends and nights when necessary, and not be tied to a printer's or binder's 40-hours per week schedule. (The only schedule we can't surmount is the postal service's; we must mail copies of RTN only on work days between 8 and 5 o'clock.) We now have not only our own press, but our own camera and plate-making equipment and our own binding equipment. We have a completely self-contained production facility.

Q. IT SOUNDS LIKE YOU'VE BEEN THRU A LOT OF EXPERIENCES WITH RTN.

A. We've learned a great deal from publishing RTN. We learn at least as much from our readers as they do from us. For one thing, we had no experience in railroading per se when we started RTN. We've certainly had an education in the transportation field since undertaking it. We've also learned a lot about the operation of the media and of the political process as it's practiced day by day. We've come to the conclusion that the news media in America are generally terrible. We have the greatest respect for the people who write the Wall Street Journal and the New York Times, and a few other news sources. They probe stories in depth and report the facts thoroughly and clearly. Would that all news media did that much! One frequently talks about the necessity of a free press for a democratic society. But the press in America is in itself largely its own worst enemy and a drag on the democratic process simply because of sloppiness, ignorance and an uncaring attitude. The media feel they have to fall back on the elements of surprise, startle and violence to attract an audience. The newspaper with the most startling headline is expected to sell the most copies. But very few things in the world happen suddenly. The news media make it appear as if events occurred out of the blue, when in reality they may have been long in preparation. By failing to report on the process going on prior to the culminating event, the media leave us in ignorance of how and why the events occurred and minimize our possible participation in them. They tend to rob us of our freedom of self-determination by not informing us of these ongoing processes. You might have the case of a person who picked up a paper on May 1, 1971 and read that most of the nation's passenger trains had been discontinued. He hadn't participated in the prior route selection process because he hadn't been informed of it. And television is even worse because it presents so much violence. No one need wonder why violence is increasing in America--people are just imitating the distorted world they see daily on TV.

Q. YOU MUST BE TEMPTED TO EDITORIALIZE A LOT ABOUT PROBLEMS YOU SEE.

A. Yes, indeed; but we've virtually given up editorials in RTN. Readers didn't want them, and, we found, they didn't need them. People in general can draw their own conclusions quite well if they are given the best facts available to work from. That's why we're basically optimistic about America. Americans have an abundance of common sense. Just give them the facts and they'll form the right conclusion. Now if the media just presented the facts more thoroughly and accurately...

RAIL TRAVEL NEWSLETTER

TRANSPORTATION SECRETARY ANNOUNCES PRELIMINARY "BARE-BONES" RAIL NETWORK

Department of Transportation Secretary John A. Volpe announced on November 30 a basic network of passenger trains to be operated beginning next May 1 by the newly created Rail Passenger Corporation (Railpax). There will be 16 routes connecting 14 major cities. The proposal raised immediate criticism from public spokesmen. See full story inside.

Nationwide rail strike threatened for December 10. See story inside.

VOL. I DECEMBER 7, 1970 NO. 1

FIVE YEARS AGO, on Dec. 7, 1970, this first issue of RTN, then called Rail Travel Newsletter, appeared. This first issue of mostly mimeographed pages was 8 pages long and sold for 25¢, compared with the present issue of 28 pages for 35¢. The presently out of print issue was reprinted twice to meet demand.

In the first RTN it was reported: "No one seems to know exactly how many intercity passenger trains are now running--somewhere near 366 is a good guess. But that number will be reduced to 150 if the rail network proposed by Secretary of DOT John Volpe is not modified. The semi-public Railpax organization is empowered by Congress to control the trains in the network specified starting May 1. The system as first announced is a sort of fan with arms radiating from Chicago, and several from New York." The network grew, and so did RTN. Happily, both are still growing.

Q. WHAT ABOUT THE FUTURE OF RTN? WHAT IMPROVEMENTS ARE YOU AIMING FOR MOST?

A. We'll go on improving the content and the graphic quality of RTN as we have in the past. But the one biggest aim we want to work on is increasing the circulation of RTN even further. Our circulation has increased with every single issue we've put out in the past five years. We have an extremely high renewal rate, tho I can't give you any precise figure right now. But increasing it more will almost automatically bring along a number of side benefits. For one thing, the more readers we have, the more varied reporting and other input we'll get from all over. And the more money we'll have to work with, since it becomes more economical to produce a product in greater quantities. We've found that word of mouth is an extremely effective way of introducing new people to RTN. A lot of people say they read RTN second- and third-hand. If these people all subscribed, it would be an enormous contribution to our publication. And if each subscriber were to enlist one new subscriber, even for just a few months, our circulation would, obviously, double immediately. And these new people would tend to renew, so the increase would be more or less permanent.

The biggest problem we're facing is the postal service's upcoming 30 per cent increase in postal rates. We're holding our breath to see how this hurdle is surmounted. In general, we can't complain about the way the postal service has treated us, however. Delivery of RTN has been quite reliable and predictable (delivery takes one day locally, two days to the Midwest and the rest of the West, and two to three days to the East and most of Canada). One place where improve-

ment could occur is in the way the service suddenly seems to lose track of people and to return as undeliverable mail to people who have not moved in years. The individual carrier at the mail's destination might be more conscientious in determining if mail is really undeliverable or not.

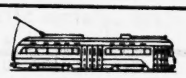
Q. IF YOU HAD IT TO DO OVER AGAIN, WOULD YOU START PUBLISHING RTN?

A. Yes, indeed! This has been a great experience for us, and hopefully a source of pleasure and information for others. RTN has been a sort of dialogue between readers and editors, and between readers and readers. For one thing, the length of time between issues is just right to allow for delivery and time to read an issue, fire back a response, and get it published in the next issue, and while the topic in question is still news. It's a very rewarding experience to be able to participate in and mediate and foster this dialogue on topics of great concern to America's travelers. Incidentally, one of the highlights of the past year was the arrival of the letter from the anonymous Amtrak man in Washington. Publication of that letter created quite a stir among readers, and also helped retain interest in RTN at a time when our print quality was failing us. (At Amtrak headquarters there was a lot of speculation, we learned, about the identity of the letter writer, but many of the people there felt we did Amtrak a favor by publishing it. We never did know who actually wrote it, tho it could not have been faked by an outsider.)

I have only one regret about editing RTN--that is that I have never had enough time to acknowledge or reply to all the readers who have sent us numerous communications and pieces of news and information. And I am constantly way behind in answering what correspondence I am able to reply to.

Yes, we certainly would do it over again, tho it couldn't be done the same way--on an impulse, the way a lot of our best moves have been made--and so might not turn out as successfully. Before the advent of RTN, we'd been having recurring dreams about trains. Initiating RTN served to eliminate them. So for one person at least, the magazine seemed to be good therapy.

Urban-Suburban Transit



LATE REPORTS INDICATE that Philadelphia will acquire some 30 PCC streetcars from Toronto to replace cars destroyed in a recent carbarn fire.

MANAGER OF BOSTON'S MBTA transit system has publicly expressed doubts about the new Boeing-Vertol cars under construction for the city's streetcar-subway system. Possible problems include unreliable performance, and difficulty in obtaining foreign-made parts.

THE SHAKER HEIGHTS Rapid Transit division of the newly reorganized Cleveland system has placed two ex-Illinois Terminal double-end cars in service due to increased patronage, stimulated by new, low fares. The PCC cars were obtained from museums.

CHANCES FOR A PRT-type transit system in Denver are fading; and the compass is pointing more toward streetcar routes in the mile-high city. New studies are underway.

PULLMAN-STANDARD'S CARBUILDING division would have had a record high profit for the 3rd 1975 quarter had the New York subway R-46 car order troubles been ended. Continuing problems with the "sophisticated electrical propulsion system" are blamed. The Wall Street Journal (Dec 15) reports that delivery of the cars is beginning this week.

TRANSIT BRIEFS: As mentioned here last issue, BART manager Herringer announced key changes in BART personnel... Special buttons entitling bearers to free off-peak Christmas shopping season rides were distributed by the Ft. Wayne, IN Public Trnsportation Co...Chicago's Regional Transportation Authority decided Dec 4 to adopt a new logo...

A CONFERENCE ON PASSENGER TRAINS

Tidbits from the CMU/FRA Conference on Improved Passenger Train Service held December 2, 3, 4, 1975 at Carnegie-Mellon University.

by Charles B. Weinstock

F. S. King of Amtrak disclosed that the new FL9PH diesels will be constant speed units. They are letting bids for 50 10-6 sleepers to be refurbished for Amfleet use. Hope to do it for about $200000/car. In reply to a question about whether he thought that Tony Haswell (who had blasted Amtrak for shabby service on too many trains) had been too harsh he said: "We deserved it". The maximum length of an Amfleet train at peak electricity need times will be 18 cars.

Bruce Flohr representing FRA said that one of the problems with bringing US train service up to European standards is that in Europe they have a Passenger railroad system that hauls freight, while here we have a Freight system that hauls passengers. We do not need 150mph trains, just 100-120mph.

Richard Rice of Carnegie-Mellon: "All the front ends of our cars and trains look like refrigerators and freezers" in contrast tothe european trains.

Louis T. Klauder: "In this country it is more of a problem of track than of power" referring to why it is difficult to run high speed trains.

Jack Humbert: (of the IC): Amtrak came into existance with a sub-standard staff. The idea of using airline methods was carried too far.

Langhorn Bond of Illinois DOT: Create a single Surface Transportation Trust Fund to be used for highways, transit, and the railroads. Revenue to the fund would come from waybill taxes, gas taxes, etc. Conrail has blinded Congress to the fact that MILW, ICG, and CNW are all in trouble too.

Ed Tennyson of Pennsylvania DOT: More passenger miles are generated in PA by rail than by bus (city and intercity). We must figure out how much revenue is derived from the efforts at keeping cars and windows clean before we expend much.

Harold Graham of Amtrak: They are exploring a true Luxury first class service. Greyhound, which operates the concessions in Chicago Union Station, has made life difficult by placing some of them directly in passenger traffic flow areas.

Reistrup: "This is the only major mode of transportation that could be improved by going back to the good old days". We must get the train to about 2/3 the auto time between cities to be competitive. 2 hours NY-DC is beyond Amtrak's reach for at least 10 years. 3 hrs NY-BOS seems possible with electrification. Repeated Graham's statement that they are investigating a true luxury service. Clocker cars will be pulled out of service by March;"2000 people a day will not have to ride in Clocker cars".

Garth Campbell of CN: Advertising isn't the only thing needed to attract riders. "Trains combined the impersonallity of the airplane with the speed of steamships". Rail suffers from an image problem but is respectable (unlike the bus) "there is nothing wrong with you mother-in-law traveling by train".

Langhorn Bond (again): "The Rock Island was once in a position, after WWII, to buy the Southern Pacific but turned it down as a bad investment". Reistrup is much better than Lewis in h03b help. "We must be able to do with less".

William Lind from Senator Taft's office: Privacy is important. The political routes (Mountaineer, DC-Denver) are bad for Amtrak as far as its image in Congress goes. "The worst enemy we (passanger train supporters) have is the federal agency that was designed to preserve it".

Besides the previous, there were presentations by a number of different manufacturers:

GM - AMT-125 a 125mph diesel train (pull-pull) with specially designed engines that would be hooked up to amfleet cars.

GE - With the E60CP we have "A worthy successor to the GG-1".

Rohr - The new turbos will be a bit different. Will have 3rd rail electric capability for operation into NYC without a stop at Harmon. Expect them in Empire Service soon.

Other manufactures were represented including LRC and Garret and Britrail.

CARS & CONSISTS

*LAKE SHORE LIMITED, train 49, at Cleveland Nov 30: engine 601, cars 8333, 1516, 2773 "Norfolk", 2802 "Halifax County", 5651, 5654, 8339, 5650, 5412, 4423, 3959, 6412 (train reported jammed; coaches dirty and littered). Train 449 at Pittsfield, MA, Nov 29: engine 601, 2802 "Halifax County", 5651, 5654, 3322 "Anthony Wayne." Nov 30: engine 600, 2836 "Missouri Valley", 5661, 5647, 3321 "Molly Pitcher". Dec 1: engine 596, 2831 "Lebanon Valley", 5657, 3322 "Anthony Wayne". Dec 2: engine 599, 2816 "Potomac River", 5645, 5642, 3321 "Molly Pitcher". Dec 3: engine 601, 2802 "Halifax County", 5654, 3322 "Anthony Wayne".

*NATIONAL LIMITED, train 31, at Pittsburgh Nov 17: engines 590, 457 (E9B); cars 1071, 2606 "Pacific Command" (NY-LA thru car), 2799 "Toronto Harbour", 8061, 5427, 5436, 5453; deadheading, 8349. Train 30, Nov 22: engines PC 7903 (GP38), 589, 444; cars 1037, 2603 "Pacific Bend" (LA-NY thru car), 2312 "Fort Lauderdale", 8063, 5426, 5680, 6067, 5474.

*SILVER STAR, train 81, at Raleigh Nov 26-27: engines 648, 556; cars 1405, 2792, 3222, 4458, 4451, 4459, 5451, 8014, 3352, 8015 (deadhead); (St. Pete section:) 4585, 5467, 5667, 5469, 5238, 2865, 2625.

*SILVER METEOR/CHAMPION, train 88, at Clearwater, Nov 30-Dec 1: engine 631; cars 1061, 4428, 4441, 5477, 4435, 2031, 8091, 3231 "Sun Ray", 2813 "Kentucky River". Miami section, at Jacksonville: engine 632; cars 1408, 4590, 4469, 4561, 4447, 8018, 3311, 2814 "Altamaha River", 2793 "Nassau River".

*SOUTHERN CRESCENT, SR train 2, at Slidell, LA Dec 3: engines 6916, 6900, 6914, 6909; baggage dorm 711, coach 818, diner 3309, coach 841, sleeper 2016 "St. Johns River", sleeper Amtrak 2621 "Pacific Northwest", dome 1613. (Note: dome 1602 in shop.)

*ADIRONDACK, train 68, at Rouses Point, NY, Dec 6: engine D&H PA #17; ATK dome coach 9562, D&H coach 204 "Lake George", diner D&H 42 "Adirondack Lodge", D&H coach 206 "Essex County", D&H coach 33 "Schroon Lake".

*CANADIAN, CP Rail train 12 Toronto-Sudbury, at Toronto Nov 29: engine 4075; baggage dorm 608; coach 127; Skyline dome-coach-buffet 501; sleeper "Chateau Lemoyne"; diner 16502 "Alexandra". Train 11 Sudbury-Toronto: engine (?); baggage dorms 612 & 605; coach 111; Skyline dome-coach-buffet 500; diner 16509 "Fairholme"; sleeper "Chateau Brule".

*SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR, train 5, at Omaha, Dec 7: engines 623, 627; cars 1163, 1187, 1154, 2269, 5015, 4818, 9475, "Linoma", 8054, 2202, 2656. Train 6: engines 621, 581; cars 1189, 1056, 1572, 4472, 4813, 9460, 9383, 8065, 2640, 2630. (Note: dome 9383 has 48 reclining airline-style seats with folddown trays in the dome.)

*PANAMA LIMITED, train 59, at Manchac, LA, Dec 6 (where it ran out of fuel): engine 618; cars 1075, 2239 "Elberton", 2262 "Placid Haven", 8310, 6013, 4474, 5807, 6407, 5431, 3345. (ICG SD40 #6008 towed the train into New Orleans, ar 3hrs 55min late.)

*COAST STARLIGHT, train 11, at San Jose Dec 4: engines 553, 570; cars 1057, 1503 "San Pascal", 4872, 4482, 8103, 4852, 4857, 4881, 3331, 8041, 2622 "Pacific Ocean". Train 11, Dec 5: engines 552, 569; cars 1088, 2366 "Regal Pass" (deadhead?), 4820, 4866, 4500, 4530, 4850, 4534, 3351, 8033, 2713 "Pine Cavern", 2728 "Pine Peak", SP business car 117 "Tucson", SP business car 141 "Oakland".

*Nebraska Football Special, Omaha-Lincoln R/T Nov 15: engine 629; cars 9253, 8050, 6450, 6454, 9479, 8012, Auto-Liner 100, Auto-Liner 670, DC 1000, Auto-Liner 101.

QUOTES OF THE WEEK***

"I calculate the annual subsidy for the airline industry at something in the order of three billion dollars. When you figure that all airports are owned by governments, constructed with government money, and pay no property taxes, you have a good start on the problem. When you add the airways system, weather service and development costs for new equipment, you are making progress. The result is that the cost of an airline ticket to the passenger represents no more than a third of the full cost of the service."

--Charles M. Davidson Jr. in letter to Wall Street Journal answering editorial critical of Amtrak subsidies, Dec 8.

Mixed Train of Thoughts

THE EMPIRE BUILDER suffered a derailment Dec 7 at Kellogg, Minnesota. The eastbound train, traveling at 70mph, ran over an 8-foot log lying between the tracks. The log caught on the underpinnings of the 7th car and derailed it and the following cars of the 11-car train. There were 127 passengers aboard, and 3 suffered minor injuries, one being hospitalized overnight. No cars overturned, and the two engines and forward cars continued on to Chicago with an hour's delay..... AMTRAK PRESIDENT REISTRUP and his family rode from Chicago to Washington DC on Dec 7 on the JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY in a slumbercoach which was a last-minute replacement for a bad ordered sleeper. And our spies saw Mr. Reistrup detrain from the SOUTHWEST LIMITED in Los Angeles Dec 5...

* * *

COMPLAINTS ARE FLOWING in to Amtrak about the schedule of the LAKE SHORE LIMITED, which misses the EMPIRE BUILDER both ways in Chicago, by 10-35 minutes. Shcedule personnel are reportedly examining spots where padding in the slow schedule can be eliminated so as to make the connection and keep times at Cleveland reasonable..... AMTRAK DESIGN TEAMS have been modifying plans for the bi-level sleepers now being planned for production. At present it is expected that they will be strictly economy sleepers, such as slumbercoaches. Reclining-seat capabilities are being designed into the lower berth beds of the double rooms. Five downstairs rooms will have both toilets and wash basins. A sixth such room will be equipped for handicapped passengers. An extra-large women's lounge is designed to aid in care of babies. Window shades are out at the moment, replaced on the drawingboards by curtains..... UNITED AIR LINES went on strike this month, and the carrier has cancelled all scheduled flights up to Christmas Day, leaving many passengers to turn to Amtrak over the holidays; the other airlines are unable to absorb the extra business. Amtrak said that UAL's "miscellaneous charge orders" will be honored for passage on its trains for the duration of the strike. The airline is a major servicer of South Bend, and on Dec 6 a 2-car South Shore train left Chicago loaded with 295 passengers stranded by the strike. (On Dec 13 a South Shore freight with a high load knocked down almost a mile of catenary at Tee Lake, Indiana, affecting trains 469 and 749 eastbound and 484 westbound; geeps were used for power on two trips on the Michigan City-South Bend route)..... AMTRAK TURBOLINER 350 struck an auto near Battle Creek, MI on Dec 11, causing no injuries and only minor damage to the train..... A FREIGHT DERAILMENT on Penn Central near Elkhart, IN on Dec 9 forced the westbound LAKE SHORE to detour on B&O tracks between Toledo and Chicago..... A BULLET FIRED at the eastbound LAKE SHORE outside Chicago on Dec 7 lodged in the outer window pane of a coach, doing no other harm..... A FREIGHT DERAILMENT on Santa Fe near Griffith, AZ on Dec 6 delayed the eastbound SOUTHWEST LIMITED about 3 hours..... THE ABRAHAM LINCOLN got a dome for a parlor car beginning Nov 17--car 9330 "Silver Chateau", former DENVER ZEPHYR "Colorado Room" parlor car. The two parlors on that train on Nov 30 were 9330 and "Port of Seattle." It was the first time since the mid-60's that 2 have run on it...

* * *

AMTRAK'S WINTER SCHEDULES, to take effect Dec 12, are shaping up this way: SILVER METEOR and CHAMPION will again operate as separate trains; their schedules will be faster, Amtrak said, because of eliminated switching movements in Jacksonville (30 mins to 1 hr 45 mins will be cut), and they will also save time because of "more efficient trains operations" at the new Richmond, VA station. The SILVER STAR will be speeded up 10-15 minutes because of that factor. The METEOR will leave NY at 3:50pm and reach Miami at 5:15pm; the CHAMPION will leave at 2:50 and reach St. Pete at 4:10pm. The SILVER STAR leaves NY at 10:10am and reached St. Pete at 12:55pm and Miami at 2:35pm. St. Pete departure is 8:20am for the CHAMP, 2:25pm for the STAR, reaching NY at 9:50am and 6:15pm resp3ctively. The METEOR leaves Miami at 10 am, the STAR at 1:10pm. The METEOR hits NY at 11:20am. The CHAMPION will accept Corridor passengers, with reservations. Kissimmee, FL becomes a stop for the CHAMP and the St. Pete section of the FLORIDIAN. Free hors d'oeuvres, wake-up coffee and orange juice are available to first class passengers on the METEOR and CHAMPION.

The NORTH COAST HIAWATHA began daily operation Dec 12 and will continue thru Jan 12. Regarding tri-weekly service, insiders say that Amtrak President Reistrup has been commenting recently on the poor quality ofservice it offers--almost as bad as no service at all. He's said, at least privately, that he wants daily operation as soon as equipment permits for the SUNSET, INTER-AMERICAN, and NORTH COAST HIAWATHA.....
THE REVIVAL OF the San Francisco-Monterey DEL MONTE is moving along slowly. In January, state funds of $3 million will become available for such rail projects. Backers of the DEL MONTE realize the need to move quickly on a plan and application. They figure $1.2 million is needed to revive it, a third each paid by Amtrak, the state, and local agencies. Of this, $300,000 is to improve the SP Monterey branch tracks. At a meeting this month, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz and Monterey county representatives decided to set a date to writing a formal proposal. Local Amtrak officials were reportedly skeptical of the drawing power of the train, tho projected figures were based on SP's 1966 ridership, in the days when it was most actively discouraging riders.....

* * *

THE OREGON PRESS recently reported that altho Governor Straub killed the additional Amtrak service in the Willamette Valley, he has left the door open for possible new service thru Eastern Oregon. Amtrak President Reistrup said privately this fall that restoration of the CITY OF PORTLAND and CITY OF LOS ANGELES routes over UP trackage will probably become a major Amtrak goal within the next year or two..... CANADIAN PACIFIC RAIL, in a late news flash has announced proposed 15% fare and sleeping-car charge increases effective Jan 15. It filed an application with the CTC Dec 15.....
AMTRAK IS PARTICIPATING in West Virginia's experimental program of providing transportation coupons, much like food stamps, to handicapped or elderly people who meet certain poverty guidelines. Info about the program by calling 304-348-2400 in West Virginia..... AN AMTRAK SPOKESMAN said that the first Amclub cars in revenue service are being phased in in mid-December, to replace conventional parlor cars. The cars are similar to Amcafe cars, having three parts: a coach section, a snack section, and two-and-one club car seating at one end, with smoking and non-smoking sections.....

* * *

THE EFFECT OF the United Air Lines strike on Amtrak, the company said, has been seen most heavily in the Cleveland-Toledo, Portland-Seattle, Denver-Chicago corridors, and between Klamath Falls and Eugene, Or. On Dec 11, Amtrak took about 60,000 telephone calls, an increase of 9000 from the previous day. Amtrak expects that the heaviest holiday travel days will be Dec 19 and 20, Dec 28, and Jan 4. (Amtrak's Chicago office was working on a reduced staff on Nov 27, and calls averaged about 1000 per hour, with a peak of nearly 1400 per hour, due to storm conditions. Amtrak can handle about 850 per hour there with a normal staff, but on that date it lost more than 50% of its inquiries)..... TWO MONEY-SAVING bus fare plans were announced suddenly as we go to press: Trailways announced a special $1 child fare (under 12) between Dec 15 and Jan 4 on any interstate trip with parent or guardian. Greyhound qukckly countered with a "Santa Claus Plan" for free trips for kids for a month starting Dec 18, if an accompanying adult pays a full round-trip fare on an interstate trip. The ICC must approve the Greyhound plan; it has already approved the former...
THE FREEDOM TRAIN has been in our area this month, and on Dec 18 at 3am leaves San Jose to travel via Milpitas, Oakland, Martinez, to Fresno on SP. On Dec 22 it is due in Bakersfield about 7am, and leaves thereabout 8am the 22nd, via Tehachapi Loop for L.A., then via SP and old PE to Pomona fairgrounds. It leaves Pomona Dec 31 for Santa Barbara; leaves Santa Barbara Jan 5 for Long Beach; leaves Long Beach Jan 8 for Anaheim (all on SP). On Santa Fe, leaves Anaheim Jan 14 for Miramar Naval Air Station spur (in San Diego area--not in San Diego proper); leaves Miramar Jan 19 for San Juan Capistrano, on display Jan 19 and 20. Then leaves Southern Calirornia for more easterly points, going to Yuma via SP Sunset Route, with point of interchange between Santa Fe and SP unknown to us (could be at Colton Junction).....
AFTER JANUARY FIRST, the South Shore probably will attempt to abandon its Gary-South Bend, IN commuter run to pressure the state legislature into subsidizing it.....

STATE OF MICHIGAN wants dining cars on the BLUE WATER. After Dec 15, Amtrak was expected to run diner-coaches 8400 and 8401 on that 403-B train. These are ex-GN cars from the old INTERNATIONAL..... LONG DISTANCE HI-LEVEL coaches will probably be cut in Amtrak's designs from 86 to 76 seats per car, making them closely comparable to ex-Santa Fe hi-levels, which seat up to 72. This move gives an indication that Washington may be more aware of the need for travel comfort on 2-days-out trips than it was when "corridor" volume-capacity seemed to dominate planning.....
ANY POSSIBLE CHICAGO-Denver Auto-Train/Amtrak cooperative program could mean operation of a second Chicago-Denver train, over the SFZ route. President Reistrup has indicated that if such a shcedule is discussed, consideration should be given to meeting the RIO GRANDE ZEPHYR at Denver in both directions. This would mean an early morning arrival westbound in Denver and an eastbound departure at 10:30-11pm. Rio Grande's rumor mill continues to bubble as winter approaches. There is a possibility that r3cent discussions between the two lines concentrated on the proposed Washington-Denver service, a portion of which may be routed over Rio Grande tracks south of Denver. In addition, there is some feeling now that Rio Grande would like to join Amtrak, but only if the present tri-weekly service would be operated. This means a possible 3-days-per-week operation of the SFZ via Rio Grande, with 4 days routed over UP, the present daily route. Amtrak sources indicate that Amtrak-Rio Grande relations have not been warm during the last year or so, in contrast with Amtrak's good relations with Southern Railway..... ROUND END CARS, ex-CZ observations, now run on the Denver-Chicago portion of the SFZ route. During Thanksgiving weekend they ran daily..... FORMER SCL ROUND end observations from the SILVER METEOR, once on the COAST STARLIGHT, are now running on the PANAMA LIMITED..... GENERAL ELECTRIC DIESEL units 701-705, and 706, 713, 716 and 717 are now operating out of the Chicago area, mainly on the ILLINOIS ZEPHYR and ILLINI. Reader Harry Grossman observed them on the IZ on Nov 25, and again on the 30th (units 702 & 703). On the 29th the first one was used on the PANAMA to New Orleans (unit 705), and out again that day.....

* * *

THE CMU-FRA CONFERENCE reported on on page 19 heard Rock Island's Tony Haswell call Amtrak service "shabby, erratic and sub-standard", to which Reistrup replied "he's talking history; everything he said is true, but let's tell the whole story." Reistrup said Amtrak had gone from a "shaky B-minus to a B-plus and it's getting better" since he took over..... PRESIDENT FORD MAY veto the omnibus railroad bill now clearing Congress. It includes $3 billion for the Colonial Corridor and other uses. NARP has made clear that the Senate's version is better than the House's, and urges rail supporters to urge Senators to override a veto if it comes. Meanwhile, an energy bill is about to emerge from Congress, rolling back domestic oil prices.....
THE WHITE HOUSE gave Amtrak another vear late in Nov to use the Metroliner telephone frequencies..... THE THREAT OF a railroad strike was removed by a union contract agreement early in December..... OVER EIGHTY PERSONS riding the northbound SILVER STAR Nov 24 were stricken with mile food poisoning and taken to Philadelphia hospitals..... ROBERT J. CASEY, editor of NARP News since Feb 1973, has been appointed Public Relations Manager of Amtrak's Central Region. Ross Capon takes over at NARP..
"E. M. FRIMBO" has been awarded an honorary life membership in NARP..... THE SECOND quarter of 1975 (compared to 2nd Q 74) found all public carriers losing ridership--air, trains, buses, water--while automobile usage jumped from 256 to 264 billion vehicle miles, says a report this month from the DOT.....

(continued from page 8)
#183 3 E units; 1 power car, 13 Amcoaches (15" late)
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GALA NEW YEAR'S SOIREE IN RENO/SPARKS. 4 days-3 nites. Lv Oakland Dec. 31. Return January 3. Includes R/T transportation by PVT RR CAR LA CONDESA, 3 nites lodging, New Year's Eve buffet dinner dance & cocktail show. $143 dbl occupancy - $159 sgl occupancy. Early reservations necessary. Ck or MO to LA CONDESA, 969 Santa Ysabel Avenue, Baywood Park, CA 93402.

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WANTED: Gulf, Mobile and Ohio, Chicago and Alton, Mobile and Ohio, Gulf, Mobile and Northern Passenger Timetables. Jack Ferry, 10041 S. Prairie Ave., Chicago IL 60628.

FREE 4/27/75 Chicago-California and Sunset Route Amtrak timetables. SSAE with enough postage to Barry Christensen, 712 S. Orange Ave., Fullerton CA 92633.

On the SAN DIEGO MAINLINE, from the press: "Consideration would be given as well to the feasibility of RELOCATING THE RAILROAD which abuts the beaches from Dana Point to San Clemente"--Norman Kelin in 12/8 L.A. Herald-Examiner describing Coastal Commission recommendations to the Calif. legislature. "The furthest inland of several possible routes would, Baggs said, 'go through the very heart of Mission Viejo' and through the HILLS east of San Juan Capistrano and San Clemente"--Santa Ana dispatch in 11/30 Orange County The Register. And what would this do to our taxes, our train speeds, open up beaches to auto development for real estate enhancement? Catalysis from R J Swan, Box 1866, Long Beach CA 90801.

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